

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Vol. 28, No. 9

September 15, 1960

Whole No. 336



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES #16

FAME AND FORTUNE

The last of Tousey's "big six" to be started. No. 1 appeared October 6, 1905. Size 8x11, 32 pages. Colored cover. Featured Wall Street and Horatio Alger type stories. No. 488 was the last original stories. From No. 489 on all stories were reprints of the earlier issues. With No. 764 the size was cut down to 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ x9 $\frac{1}{2}$. It ended with No. 1197, Sept. 7, 1928, while on its third reprinting.

Postscript on the Pen Names of Edward S. Ellis

by Denis R. Rogers

With one exception this postscript deals with names mentioned in "The Ralph Adimari Pseudonyms" (The Roundup, Vol. 27 No. 9, Whole No. 234 Sep. 15, 1959, pages 74/79). In his brief forward Mr. Adimari explains why he felt it to be impracticable to give the sources of his information. Having made a special study of Edward S. Ellis I can offer the readers of "The Roundup" some information on the names recorded as pseudonyms of that author, namely Edward Sylvester, Mahlon A. Brown, E. S. E., Henry R. Brisbane, Lieut.-Col. Harry Hazelton, Herrick Johnstone and Augustin Daly (see Page 76).

Of the seven names, Henry R. Brisbane and Mahlon A. Brown alone are fully proven pen names of Edward S. Ellis—see "The Roundup" (Vol. 27, No. 3, Whole No. 318, March 1959, Page 22 for Henry R. Brisbane) and (Vol. 28, No. 3, Whole No. 330, March 1960, Page 21 for Mahlon A. Brown).

Two more names are relatively unimportant. Edward Sylvester has been found only once ("Boxing for Boys" by Edward Sylvester—an article in "The Golden Argosy" Vol. 6, No. 12 (272), Feb. 18, 1888) and E. S. E. a mere seven times (sketches in "The New York Fireside Companion" (Mar. 14, 1868), "The New York Weekly"

(July 27, 1874) and "Golden Days" (Aug. 27, 1881) and poems in "Public Opinion" (Jan. 10, Sept. 1 and Dec. 24, 1874) and "The Boys' Holiday" (Feb. 18, 1890). As these shorts all appeared at times when Ellis was definitely writing for the publications concerned, it seems likely that Ellis was their author. After all, Edward Sylvester were his Christian names and E. S. E. his initials.

Nevertheless it must be stressed that they are NOT fully proven pseudonyms of Ellis, since no reprints under his full name or under one of his definite pen names have been found. In fact it could be argued from a severely logical standpoint that their ascription to Ellis is based purely on the unreliable link of similarity of names. For my part, until either name turns up attached to a major writing, such as a serial, I propose to place them both in the circumstantial Ellis pen name category, and leave it at that.

However I would like to make one general point about initials, namely that the periodical and the date of the publication are material to the question of authorship. Thus there would be a far stronger case for Ellis authorship, where the items by E. S. E. appear in a paper to which,

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32. Thomas W. Figley, 265 West William St., Delaware, Ohio (new address)
244. H. C. Ingraham, 322 West 5th St., Owensboro, Ky. (new member)

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and at a time when, Ellis was a regular contributor, than where an odd item by E. S. E. came to light in a periodical for which Ellis did not normally write.

Next let's turn to Mr. Adimari's suggestion that Edward S. Ellis was the author of the serials ascribed to Augustin Daly, the famous playwright and theatre manager, which were published in George Munro's "New York Fireside Companion" between 1872 ("Under the Gaslight") and 1877 ("Divorce").

The connection with Ellis rests on an advertisement of "The Patriot Highwayman," when published, was by the author of "Leah the Forsaken" (Augustin Daly). Admittedly that is *prima facie* proof, but it is by no means conclusive, when one investigates the matter thoroughly, because:

(1). Although I have not seen the advertisement myself in any of the many Munro publications I have studied, I am indebted to Professor Johannsen for a note that, as he remembers it, there was only a single advertisement ascribing "The Patriot Highwayman" to Capt. Carleton (letter to the writer dated November 16, 1959).

(2). The single advertisement was for "The Patriot Highwayman" as a forthcoming book. As Irwin P. Beadle's Ten Cent Novels Nos. 1 and 2 were both by Capt. Carleton, a typesetting error (similar to that which I believe to have wrongly linked Ellis' pen name, Lt. R. H. Jayne, with W. O. Stoddard) seems a distinct possibility, as well as a logical explanation of a probable error.

(3). A careful reading of "The Patriot Highwayman" revealed that, while style and grammar are adequate, there is nothing in the writing to suggest Ellis authorship.

It was because the evidence was so nebulous, both for and against, that I refrained from commenting on Augustin Daly as a possible Ellis pen name in my earlier "Roundup" articles. Admittedly that was an oversight, which should be rectified. Even so I must support Professor Johann-

sen's marked lack of enthusiasm for the suggested connection ("The House of Beadle & Adams", Vol. 2, Page 78) and therefore have placed Augustin Daly in the improbable Ellis pen name category.

Lt.-Col. Harry Hazelton, sometimes spelled Hazleton or Hazeltine, is the most important of the seven names listed by Mr. Adimari, inasmuch as it was used for at least eleven novels and serials (Beadle & Co.—seven between Dec. 8, 1864 and Aug. 29, 1865; Leslie Bros., New York—one in 1867; American News Company, publishers' agent—two in 1866 and Street & Smith—one in 1865). Additionally, "The American Catalog of Books, 1866-1871" compiled and arranged by James Kelly (John Wiley & Son, New York, 1871) lists two published by George Munro in 1869, namely "The Hunters of the Black Hills" and "Billy Bowlegs," which in fact appeared as Nos. 143 and 147 of Munro's Ten Cent Novels, both by the author of "Old Jim of the Woods" (Munro's Ten Cent Novels No. 46, by Charles Wentworth, published on Aug. 26, 1865). Whether Charles Wentworth was the real name of that author or, like Hazelton, merely a pen name, has not been established.

There may well have been other stories by Harry Hazelton (e.g., serials in "The New York Weekly") for I did not feel it necessary to conduct an exhaustive search.

A poem by Harry Hazelton appeared in "Flag of Our Union" Vol. 10, P. 270, Aug. 25, 1855 (Source: Letter by Mr. Adimari to the writer dated Nov. 29, 1956). At that time Ellis was only 15 years old and, if Harry Hazelton were his pen name, that would antedate his previously known first published work, "The Wanderer" (a poem) in Ballou's Dollar Monthly (Vol. 6, No. 3 (33), September 1857) by two years.

A first published work, such as a poem, at age fifteen is not impossible even if improbable; but why should Ellis have started out by using a pen name, when nothing further by him under a pseudonym has been found

before 1862 ("Life on the Flat-Boat; or, The Scouts of Mad Anthony" by Nick Wilson, New York Weekly, June 12 to July 21, 1862)? Mr. Adimari, while admitting the "Flag of Our Union" poem to be strong evidence against Ellis authorship, suggested that the fifteen year old lad was trying to imitate Harry Hazel, a popular writer of the pre-dime novel era.

The next step was a study of six of the seven dime novels by Hazelton/Hazeltine, which are recorded in "The House of Beadle & Adams" as first published in *The American Tales* (AT) and *Beadle's Dime Novels* (DN).

In my view the style of none of these six novels resembles that of proven Ellis stories of the period—more of that later—but the really telling evidence against Ellis authorship rests on three tales in particular, namely:

2-AT: *The Border Spy; or, The Beautiful Captive of the Rebel Camp* by Lieut.-Col. Hazeltine, formerly Capt. Company A, Fremont's Body Guard. Dec. 8, 1863.

9-AT: *The Prisoner of the Mill; or, Captain Hayward's "Body-Guard"* by Lieut.-Col. Hazeltine. July 12, 1864.

12-AT: *California Joe; or, The Angel of the Wilderness. A Story of the War in Virginia* by Lieut.-Col. Hazeltine. Oct. 11, 1864.

The military background to the three stories strikes me as so detailed that, in fact, the author may well have been a captain in Fremont's Body Guard. At any rate I feel sure that he must have served in the Army of the Mississippi. Ellis was a school-master in New Jersey throughout the Civil War.

The three stories depict all Unionists as brave and upright and all Confederates as cowardly and vicious. That virulently biased slant is quite alien to Ellis' somewhat sentimental view of the Civil War as a struggle of ideals between Americans, devoid of personal hate or malice. It is very unlikely—I would almost go so far as to say, inconceivable—that the man who wrote:

"It was American against American and the officers and soldiers on both sides were the best in the world." ("Epochs in American History" by Edward S. Ellis: Page 163, Chapter XV—Gettysburg, A. Flanagan Company, Chicago, 1896) could have written also such anti-Southern stories as numbers 2, 9 and 12 of *The American Tales*, even though those tales were issued during the Civil War itself, when feelings ran high.

Reverting now to the question of style, the already formidable case against Ellis authorship is supported by a number of florid passages quite unlike Ellis' direct narrative methods. I give one example to show what I mean:

"But the other! Sympathy would drop a tear—charity would drop the veil—Justice, tempered with mercy, will permit the misguided and his faults to rest together side by side, within the grave—whither he passed just in time to save his name from the madness of having drawn his sword against his honored flag." (89-DN: "The Seminole Chief; or, The Captives of the Kissimmee" by Lieut.-Col. Hazelton. Aug. 29, 1865. Page 47).

The reader may also care to read the opening paragraph of 77-DN:—"Quindaro; or, The Heroine of Fort Laramie" by Lieut.-Col. Hazelton—Jan. 31, 1865, for another specimen of un-Ellis flowery rhetoric.

Thus careful research has produced an impressive weight of circumstantial evidence that Ellis was NOT the author of the Hazelton tales; but, now that the connection with Ellis has been suggested in print, I should like to disprove it, if at all possible. Therefore, if any member of the H. H. B. comes across any item, short or long, by Harry Hazelton/Hazeltine, other than the Beadle items and those listed below, perhaps he would be good enough to let me know the details, including the first line of the text:

Acephali; or, *The Pearl of the Sweet Water* (1866); *The Trail of*

Blood (1866); Venetia; or, The Gambler's Pledge (1865). All these three bore the imprint of The American News Company.

Riggolio the Renegado (Leslie Brothers, New York, 1867).

Five shorts in "The New York Fireside Companion" (18 May, 6 June 3 August, 31 August and 19 October 1869).

Two shorts in "Good News" (1 October 1892 and 25 November 1893—probably reprints from "The New York Weekly").

In the meantime I must content myself with consigning Harry Hazelton and Charles Wentworth to the improbable Ellis pen name category.

When the suggestion was made to me some years back that Herrick Johnstone was one of Ellis' many pen names, the link was based on the following extract from his introduction to "Seth Jones of New Hampshire" (G. W. Dillingham Company, New York, 1907, Page 13):

"Among the writers of the first dime novels were Mrs. Metta V. Victor, one of the most talented and popular writers of the West; Colonel A. J. H. Duganne, a poet of no mean ability, and an Episcopal clergyman. The congregation of the last-named gentleman discovered his secret—he used a nom de plume — and made things interesting for him, but he was great enough to care naught for their opinion."

In his letter to the writer, dated 29 Nov. 1956, Mr. Adimari suggested that, in fact, Ellis himself was "the famous minister" referred to, having used Herrick Johnstone to cash in on the name of a well known preacher of the time, Herrick Johnson. Apparently Johnson was so puritanical and so little in need of money that Mr. Adimari is satisfied he would never have deigned to write "dime novels."

While I was prepared to concede that Rev. Herrick Johnson almost certainly was not the author of the Herrick Johnstone tales, I was far from happy about the rest of Mr. Adimari's theory. So I sat down to study

some of the five dime novels by Herrick Johnstone published by Beadle between June 1864 and March 1865 (4 tales) and in 1886 (1 tale).

Unfortunately only three of the five stories were then available to me, namely 10-AT (Aug. 16, 1864), 76-DN (Dec. 27, 1864) and 18-AT (21 March 1865). Reading these three tales did not allay my doubts in any way. I found no typical Ellis touches in the writing and the anti-secessionist sentiments of 18-AT "Sergeant Slasher; or, The Border Feud" is quite out of line with Ellis' well-known "on-the-fence" views about the North and South during the Civil War.

Of the two remaining Herrick Johnstone tales, "The Messenger; or, The Maid of Gresham Grange" (Beadle's Dime Library of Choice Fiction No. 6, June 21, 1864), as described in "The House of Beadle & Adams" (V. 1, Page 138):

"Lives and characters of the year 1651, when Charles II struck for his throne and lost all in the battle of Worcester."

does not bring Ellis to mind for a moment. Nor does the synopsis of the other unread tale: "Barney Blake the Boy Privateer; or, The Cruise of the Queer Fish. A Tale of the Sea Scud and Ocean Trails of the War of 1812" do anything to suggest Ellis authorship, for the War of 1812 was not a popular subject with Ellis and, moreover, he rarely wrote sea stories.

The above evidence about Herrick Johnstone, such as it is, must be classed as purely circumstantial. It neither proves nor disproves Mr. Adimari's certainty. However the readers of "The Roundup" now have the evidence and so can make up their own minds. So far as this article is concerned, the name, Herrick Johnstone, is without hesitation relegated to the improbable Ellis pen name category.

The one exception referred to at the beginning of this postscript is Oscar Ellis. That name was first put forward by Mr. Adimari in his article "The William J. Benners Pseudo-

nym's" (The Roundup Vol. 27 No. 2 (Whole No. 317), Feb. 15, 1959) and commented upon by me in Part III of my recent article (The Roundup, Vol. 27, No. 5 (Whole No. 320) Page 45, May 15, 1959).

Recently I found in the records of the late Mr. A. W. Lawson a listing of serials which appeared in that rare English story paper, "The Rover's Log." It includes "The Bad Boy of the Family" by Alfred Sherrington (begun in No. 40, Dec. 18, 1872). Since there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of Mr. Lawson's listing, then Oscar Ellis and Alfred Sherrington were one and the same author.

In an appendix by the publisher to "The Old Boys' Books. A History of the Old Time Journals for Boys. Their Publishers, Authors, Artists and Editors" by Ralph Rollington (H. Simpson, Leicester, England, 1913) the following note appears on Page 95:

"Alf. Burrage . . . was editor of "The Young Englishman" and used the pen names of Alf. Sherrington and Philander Jackson, H.U.A. (short for Hard-Up Author)".

Alf Burrage was a brother of the better known, E. Harcourt Burrage and had a son, Alf. Burrage, who also became a juvenile author.

Of course the above is not absolute proof, because I have been unable to check "The Rover's Log" and because Mr. Simpson did not give the source of his information that Alfred Sherrington was a pen name of Alfred Burrage. For all that the evidence does point to Alf. Burrage as the strongest candidate yet for true authorship of "Just My Luck" by Oscar Ellis. Doubtless Mr. Burrage was quite unaware that Oscar Ellis was a pen name of his, since it seems certain that Frank Leslie concocted the name, when pirating the story.

By way of postscript to a postscript I would like to make a general point, about which I feel strongly. It is that there is no alternative to thorough research, when considering the old time pen names. As often as

not one is reminded of an iceberg, where the greater part is hidden from sight. When all the available evidence has been uncovered, what seemed probable all too frequently proves untenable. Therefore I commend the bibliographical standard never to jump to hasty conclusions and never to be convinced without weighing all the evidence.

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